



# MONTEREY NEWS

NOVEMBER 1996  
VOLUME XXVI · Number 11



## THE TOWN

**"We Go to Court."** Litigation goes forward. No agreement was reached at the final meeting on October 7 which Monterey and most of the other towns hoped would resolve the long-standing one person/one vote controversy in electing the School Committee of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. The evening certainly was an example of how failure to compromise can be destructive. One participant later compared the impasse to a microcosm of global troubles in which nations seem to prefer to self-destruct rather than bend, and reach agreement.

Charles Ketchen, Alford Select Board Chair, brought to the meeting a proposal which was a hybrid of weighted voting and district-wide voting, the two options which have most divided the towns. His proposal was not acceptable to Sheffield. Sheffield counsel Alan Rom disagreed with towns voting on other towns' representatives because theoretically outsider votes could override the votes of residents in a tight contest. Asked to speak for her town, Janet Stanton, Sheffield Select Board Chair, seconded Rom's view, as did David Macy, also from Sheffield. A brief caucus yielded no agreement based on Ketchen's compromise proposal.

Monterey supported it. "It would be an opportunity for us to say, 'O.K., this might work.' It's not the druthers of everybody, but that's what a compromise is," said Gige O'Connell. Meeting

facilitator Bruce Person said, "We're back to square one." He did allow the meeting to go into overtime in search of some plan allowing the towns to form their own solution, rather than having one imposed by a court ruling.

Hope glimmered briefly when James McGarry, Sheffield Police Chief and also a plaintiff in the case, proposed doing away with town boundaries for school taxing and election of the school committee. The school district would be its own governing entity with property appraised independently and representatives elected as residents of the district rather than of the towns. In positive response, New Marlborough Select Board Chair Courtney Turner said such a system would be a "true compromise, not a band-

aid." All the other towns except Egremont expressed willingness to look at such a plan. Egremont was opposed for the present, but *all* agreed that creating a self-governing district would take at least a year's planning. This was the only agreement of the evening. Disharmony returned when Sheffield refused to maintain the *status quo* voting procedure or to put litigation in abeyance during a planning period. Ms. Stanton said that Sheffield had practiced patience long enough. Although Sheffield agreed to weighted voting during this period of the meeting, Egremont's representatives said they would not accept weighted voting in any form for any length of time.

Monterey's Gige O'Connell lamented that residents of the towns will be



*Cody Funk of Sandisfield Road enjoying seasonal chores.*

MAGGIE LEONARD



very distressed by the cost of legal proceedings. At 8:26 p.m. Bruce Person adjourned the meeting saying, "We go to court." Since the School Committee is unable to pay legal fees for going to court, they will no doubt be apportioned among the towns, although Sheffield, as plaintiff, could be considered free of obligation, according to counsel Alan Rom. There may yet be hope in bringing a compromise plan before voters at a special town meeting. If a majority of voters in the towns approved a compromise, it would probably influence the final court decision.

Again, the Monterey Select Board has done everything possible to seek a compromise between the faction for weighted voting and that for district-wide voting. The Board deplores the expense as well as the long-term damage to district relations in providing the best education possible for district children.

**Miscellany.** Responding to complaints about speeders passing stopped school buses, Police Chief Gareth Backhaus appeared before the Select Board on September 30 to assure members that speeding will decrease and citations increase.

Every third year Lake Garfield is drawn down deep (as opposed to partial drawdowns two years running) to facilitate killing weeds in the shoreline shallows; this is the year for such a deep drawdown. After it is complete, work will resume on River Road, which runs alongside the Konkapot River, fed by Lake Garfield. The road work should be finished in about a month, according to Dean Amidon.

Amidon also told the Board that the Veterans Memorial Committee has received an estimate for installing three stelae on which the names of World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans will be inscribed. A fund raiser is being planned.

— Jane Black

The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ Monterey, MA 01245.

## REGIONAL PLANNING SESSION SCHEDULED

Public meetings have been planned around the Berkshires for public input on issues before the Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission. Closest to Monterey is the subregional meeting on November 19 at the South County campus of Berkshire Community College in Great Barrington (343 Main Street, Room 57) starting at 7 p.m.

The Commission writes:

Why is it that you hear so much about the north-south connector, the wall at Pontoosuc Lake, the widening of Routes 7 and 20, the lack of commercial airline service in the county, and elimination of tolls on the Turnpike only *after* they become problems? Not to mention "Approval Not Required" subdivisions along public ways, long-haul trucks rattling over local roads, sprawling new commercial development on the landscape, inadequate facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and tourists, crumbling bridges and other infrastructure—important things that affect our communities and our quality of life.

It's time to resolve transportation issues in the Berkshires. The region needs a strong, clear transportation plan that expresses the priorities and preferences of the community. Your input is needed. Help us ensure that we don't spend another three years fighting the same battles over local control, responsible planning for major infrastructure investments, and the direction our cities and towns will take in coordinating land use and transportation systems for the twenty-first century. Tell us which efforts have been successful or unsuccessful in preserving community character, economic opportunity, and the quality of life you value.

### STEFAN GROTZ

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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## VETERANS' MEMORIAL PLANNED

The Monterey Veterans' Memorial Committee has just about completed its mission of establishing a Veterans' Memorial Park at the corner of Blue Hill Road and Route 23. The Cemetery Committee has generously allowed the town to use this corner of the new cemetery for the memorial park. It is a very beautiful site.

Pictures and sketches of the monuments and the park will be published shortly in the *Monterey News*. We shall then proceed to solicit funds for the project, estimated to cost approximately \$13,000. We are hopeful that the response will be generous and rapid—as it has been in the past. More to come next time.

— Dean P. Amidon, Chair  
Veterans' Memorial Committee

## NOTICES

Winter hours for the Monterey Transfer Station commenced on Sunday, October 27, 1996, as follows:

Sunday: 10 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 8 a.m.—1 p.m.

(unchanged)

Saturday: 8 a.m.—1 p.m.

(unchanged)

Applications for stickers for authorized users' vehicles may be obtained at Town Hall any time; completed applications together with fee may be mailed or left at Town Hall. Stickers will be mailed to applicants.

The Monterey Town Hall will be closed on Monday, November 11, 1996, for the observance of Veterans' Day. There will be no meeting of the Monterey Select Board or the Board of Health on Monday, November 11, 1996. The next regularly scheduled meeting of these boards will be Monday, November 18, 1996.

— Monterey Select Board



## CET SEEKS INTERNS

Berkshire Community College (BCC) and the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) are working together on a state-wide project sponsored by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The School to Work Program will develop and provide courses in solid waste management, and offer solid waste internships at six community colleges across the state. BCC's new three-credit course, entitled Managing Solid Waste: Challenges and Solutions, will be offered next spring. Four-credit paid internships will entail 150 hours during the period February through May, pay \$6-\$8/hour, and include a weekly seminar. Sherill Baldwin, Solid Waste Specialist at CET, will be teaching the class and overseeing the internship program. CET hopes that area businesses, solid waste districts, towns, schools, and other institutions dealing directly with waste management will host interns.

On October 18 there will be a meeting at BCC for the colleges involved with this project. Representatives from the five other community colleges, and staff from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and School to Work, who are coordinating this program, will meet to share ideas and tour Energy Answers, a waste-to-energy facility located in Pittsfield. Energy Answers is hoping to host an intern next spring through this program. DEP and the School to Work program see the need for more students to gain job skill training and increase the number of knowledgeable people in the field of waste management. For information, please call Sherill Baldwin at CET, 413-445-4556.

CET is a non-profit organization providing energy and resource conservation programs and services throughout western Massachusetts.

## ALTERATIONS CUSTOM TAILORING

— ARRIE —

528-1943

Weekends best — Leave message

## NEW MARLBOROUGH AND MONTEREY SCHOOLS

The first of several RIF (Reading Is Fundamental) distributions took place in September. Children are able to choose, from a wide variety, a book to keep. Through this very special program they are able to begin and add to their own libraries. The distribution's theme was in fact "libraries." September is Library Card Sign-up Month. Children were encouraged to get their own library cards. When you think

about it, nothing so inexpensive will ever bring so much in return. Make it a family project to get a library card!

October is Fire Prevention Month. The schools really immerse the children

in all aspects of this important life- and property-saving endeavor. The New Marlborough Fire Department visited New Marlborough Central and gave a demonstration of their safety equipment. Ask the children what to do if their clothes catch fire and they will, without hesita-

tion, tell you to Stop, Drop, and Roll. They may also be drawing maps of their houses with escape routes, and telling mom and dad to test the smoke alarms as a result of their fire prevention knowledge.

Another sure sign of autumn is the Duryea's annual apple

squeeze. Anna brings the apple press and the children see how juice is made. Best of all they literally taste the fruits of their labor.

— Deborah Mielke



*Campaign sign, Monterey, 1996.*

## BENEFIT — AUCTION — OF ART AND ANTIQUES from the estate of EDITH WILSON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1996

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**ART 1 p.m.**

Paintings by Edith Wilson

**Preview 8:30 a.m.**

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**MONTEREY UNITED  
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**Will There Be a "Meeting House"?**

Last month Kathy Page Wasiuk began a series of articles on the history of Monterey United Church of Christ. Over the coming months Kathy and Delight Dodyk will describe the historical place of the church building and church community in the life of Monterey. What prompted the series was the realization that the structure needs serious repair and renovation.

As Kathy wrote in last month's *News*, the building was known as a "meeting house" more than as a "church." It was not just for the religious covenantal community; it was also a place where "[p]olitical discussion and community decisions took place...[T]he meeting house dominated community life as the place for town meetings, worship, and emergencies." Realizing the central role the meeting house/church played and continues to play in the life of Monterey, we formed a committee to plan a capital campaign. A primary mover was and is Dr. Robert Emmel, a long-time summer



resident and active member of the church. In keeping with the spirit and role of the meeting house in the life of the larger community, the committee includes interested and committed people from the wider community as well.

Some needs are obvious: belfry repair, reinforcement of the foundation, fire escape, roof repair, and exterior painting, for example. However, we also hope and intend to make the building more "user friendly," honoring the tradition of meeting house for Monterey at large. We want all of the building to be accessible to people of all ages and conditions! That means access for all to the upstairs from within, which will require renovating the downstairs and its entrance.

As you can see, this will be a major undertaking. But we feel it is important to the life of the religious and secular communities to engage in such campaign. And we believe the articles that Delight and Kathy will write over the next several months will affirm the need to continue the time-honored tradition of a "meeting house" in Monterey.

— Keith Snow, Pastor  
Monterey United Church of Christ

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## FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK/ CHILDREN'S HEALTH, INC.

Children's Health Program is based at 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington; phone 413-528-9311 for information.

**Family Center To Open.** We plan to open our Family Center at 940 South Main Street in Great Barrington on November 4. Aside from regularly planned activities, we will have drop-in-hours, during which families can use the clothing and toy exchange, lending libraries, get

information and referrals, and rent car seats. There is a playroom for children while parents utilize services. Drop-in hours are: Monday, 10 a.m.-12 noon; Tuesday, 3-5 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m.-12 noon; Thursday, 10 a.m.-12 noon; Friday, 3-5 p.m.

We will try this schedule for the month of November. Please call early in the month to be sure that we have opened on schedule. If you cannot meet this schedule, call for an appointment. The Family Support Network staff invites everyone to an open house on November 22, 3-6 p.m.. Join us in a light supper as we give thanks for our new space, made possible by a grant from the Children's Trust Fund and tremendous community support during past years.

**Storytimes.** Storytimes (for children through six years of age) will be held as follows: Otis Public Library, November 5 and 19, 3:30 p.m.; Sandisfield Public Library, November 2 and 16, 10 a.m.; Lee Public Library, Spanish Speaking, November 7 and 21 at 6:30 p.m.; Mason Library (Great Barrington), Wednesdays, 10 a.m. Sponsored by a grant from the Children's Trust Fund and Department of Education. More storytimes will be held in the early spring.

**Activities.** At the new Family Center unless noted otherwise.

November 4, 18, 25: GED tutoring, single parent playgroup, 10 a.m.-12 noon.

November 7, 14, 21: Great Barrington parent-child playgroup, 9:30-11:30 a.m. We thank St. Peter's Parish

for their cooperation and the use of the St. Peter's Center during the past year.

November 13: New parents program, "Post-Partum Blues" by Gail Puntin, MSW, Barrington OBGYN, 6:30 p.m. Playgroup leaders, parent-to-parent volunteers, and parents are encouraged to attend this session. Childcare available.

To register call Loren.

November 16: Fathers' group, 10 a.m. Information, call Tony. Clothing exchange also open.

Family Center will be closed on November 11, 18, and 29.

**Holiday Programs.** Eagle Santa Fund applications will be at CHP November 1. There are income guidelines. Lee families need to apply at the Town Hall in Lee for the Lilaberte Toy Fund. The Watson Fund and CHP have combined efforts to serve family holiday needs. Applications will be available at CHP November 18. Families wishing to donate items for the Holiday Fund may use the same application.

Community Services will provide Thanksgiving baskets and sponsor a Christmas program. Applications from CS, 8 Castle Street, Great Barrington,

**Miscellany.** Thanks to all who helped with the successful Hands At Work show October 12. We added \$2,000 to our Emergency Childcare Fund.

Community Services is accepting

fuel assistance applications. Call 528-1947 to see if you qualify.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Massachusetts has a representative available to assist you at CHP, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington on Fridays. Please call 413-499-9964 and ask for Scott Davis to make an appointment.

— Claudette Callahan



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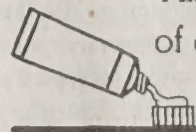
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## LAKE GARFIELD ASSOCIATION

We are busy working on the milfoil weevil project mentioned in previous articles. I have contacted the program's director and am currently gathering the lake facts necessary to structure a program specific to Lake Garfield. We will be submitting a grant application to the Massachusetts DEM for funding the weevil experiment under its Clean Lakes Program. We received funding under this program for a septic effluent testing project completed several years ago, and the DEM has indicated that our application for the weevil program would be viewed favorably. We will keep you informed as we learn more about these weevils and the program over the next few months. If you are around the lake this fall, please remove dead leaves and weeds from your shore area. Decaying plants provide the nutrients that weeds love.

I have received several complaints about the use of waterbikes, or jet-skis, on Lake Garfield. At our final meeting in August there was somewhat of an uproar about them. The state owns Lake Garfield, and it is up to the state, not us, to regulate waterbikes. The only current regulation is a minimum-age law for operators (16 years). Several expressions of concern about safety prompted me to do a little research. In 1994 (the most

recent numbers I could find) fifty-six people died in waterbike-related accidents. In that same year, fifty-eight people died in rowboats, and another seventy-eight died in canoes or kayaks.

Boating safety depends on common sense and courtesy. Waterbikes should stay clear of other boats. I know jumping wakes is fun, but waterbikers must stay further back than I often see. Running slalom around the water-ski course buoys is also fun, but stay clear of the buoys. That course is an extremely fragile (and expensive) setup. On the subject of noise, new waterbikes are no louder than outboard engines, but their whining sound is particularly annoying to most people. When riding a waterbike, it is more courteous to move around the lake than to run circles in front of someone's dock. Early morning rides also win few friends. If we all practice a little courtesy there is plenty of room on Lake Garfield for everyone. The lake is much less crowded than it was twenty years ago, and we are fortunate not to have easy public access. Let's all enjoy the Lake.

Memorial Day is only seven months away!

— David Quisenberry

## THE BIDWELL HOUSE

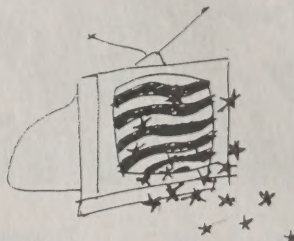
October 15 marks the end of the regular tour schedule at The Bidwell House. Thanks to the Museum's new full color brochure, more advertising, and the increase in educational programs, attendance is up 17% over 1995. Visitors came from eighteen states, including Hawaii, California, Texas, New Mexico,

Arizona, Idaho, and Florida. Outside the United States, visitors from several areas of Canada and England, Spain, Brazil, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines toured the house. We also had neighbors visit from as close as Art School Road. Every

year The Bidwell House receives visits from direct descendants of Reverend Bidwell. This year we met Jamey Bidwell and family, of Amherst and the Philippines; Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Blacke of Murphysboro, Idaho; and Kate and Steve Engle of Bennington, Vermont. In addition, the museum was visited by Jack Hargis' sister Carol Gordon of San Antonio, Texas, and his niece, Lisa Hough of Corpus Christi, Texas. (Jack Hargis and David Brush purchased The Bidwell House and property in 1960, and restored it to its original eighteenth-century condition.)

This year The Bidwell House Annual Holiday Open House for Members is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2-5 p.m. This free event is held for Museum members only, a special thanks for their continued support of The Bidwell House, which will be decorated in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century styles with dried herbs and flowers grown in our heirloom gardens. "Yuletide at The Bidwell House" will be held the following day, Sunday, December 8, when we are open to the public, 12 noon-4 p.m. This event will feature tours of the Museum, punch and cookies by the fire-side, and decorating the Christmas tree. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$2 for children under twelve. For information please call 528-6888.

— Anita Carroll-Weldon



### Monterey United Church of Christ

**Sunday Services • 10 a.m.**  
(Child care available)

#### For assistance & information:

Keith Snow (Pastor) ..... 528-5850  
Bob Emmel (Clerk, Trustee) ... 528-1321  
Tom O'Brien (Trustee) ..... 269-7471  
Judy Hayes (Worship) ..... 528-1874

#### With a prayer request or to join the Prayer Chain:

MaryKate Jordan ..... 528-5557  
Mary or Ray Ward ..... 528-9243  
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## NEW ENGLAND KESWICK

In this season of thanksgiving, New England Keswick can reflect with gratitude upon another year of growth and effectiveness in its camp ministry to young people. Among the highlights: a record number of campers aged seven through eighteen, nearly 650 in all, attended Keswick's "Summer '96" program, spread over seven one-week sessions from June 30 to August 17. Some Keswick campers came from Berkshire towns, while others traveled to Monterey from surrounding New England and New York state. The seven-week season continued a trend of increasing what was a four-week program just a few years ago, in response to the large enrollment Keswick has enjoyed in recent summers.

This past summer was the seventh in a row in which Keswick has offered a scholarship program for children from urban areas who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend a Christian youth camp program in the Berkshires. The theme for Keswick's "Summer '96" program was "Headin' for Higher Ground." For hundreds of chil-



*Happy campers at New England Keswick last summer.*

dren and teenagers, time spent at Keswick truly brought them to new personal heights as they were challenged and encouraged by the spiritually meaningful message and atmosphere of the Keswick experience.

New England Keswick's annual Sunday Thanksgiving Dinner will take place on November 24 at 2 p.m. Come

enjoy a great meal, good music, and friendly fellowship in a warm fireside atmosphere on an autumn afternoon. Adults and children \$8; ages four through six, \$4, three years and under, no charge. For reservations, call 528-9558.

— Matt Kinnaman

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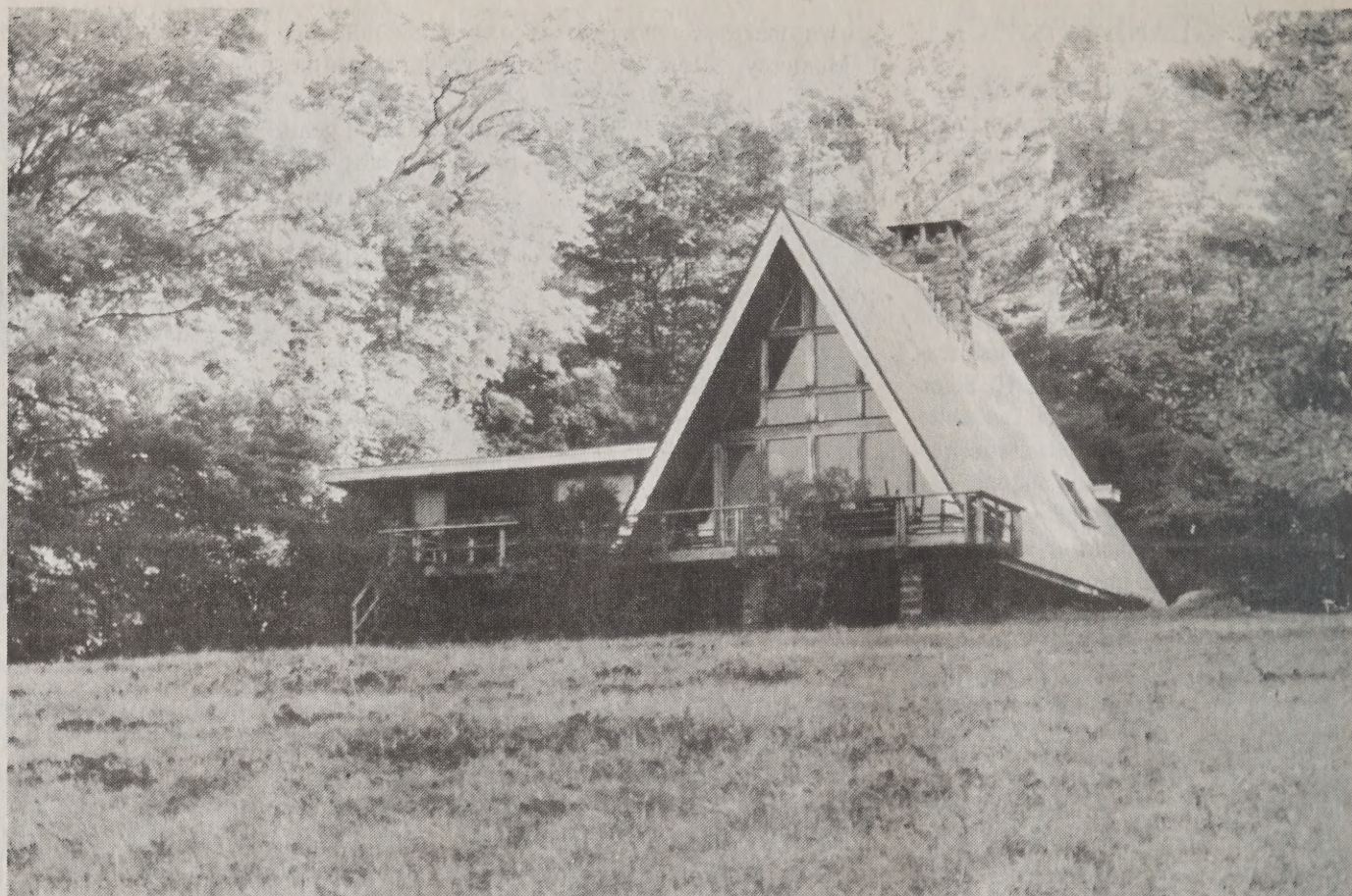
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### HOSPICE CARE

HospiceCare in the Berkshires will host an open house on Wednesday, November 6, 4:30–6 p.m. at its South County location, 19 Pleasant Street, Great Barrington. November is National Hospice Awareness Month, and the public is invited to meet HospiceCare staff and become familiar with services provided, which include the organization's Good Neighbor, Patient Care, and Community Bereavement programs. HospiceCare's lending library will be highlighted, and refreshments will be served. For information contact MaryKate Jordan, Community Education Coordinator, at 528-4786, or Kristi Nelson, Development Director, at 443-2994.

National Hospice Awareness Month brings other news as well. HospiceCare in The Berkshires and Fairview Hospital will co-sponsor an interactive panel discussion entitled "Grief and the Holidays: A Double-Edged Sword for Health Care

Providers" on Tuesday, November 19, 6:30–9 p.m. at Fairview Hospital. Panel members will be Joan Angelo, Mickie Ayari, Julie McCarthy, and MaryKate Jordan. The panel will focus first on identifying grief triggers and issues specific to healthcare providers. Then they will present ways to develop satisfying coping strategies. There will be small-group activities for panel and participants; a question-and-answer period will follow. Nursing contact hours will be available. For information and registration contact Doreen Hutchinson at Fairview Hospital, 528-0790, or MaryKate Jordan at HospiceCare, 528-4786.

MaryKate Jordan and Mary Bedient-Wood will speak on the topic "How to Help When Someone a Child Loves is Dying" at a reception on Wednesday, November 20, 5–6:30 p.m. at HospiceCare's South County office, 19 Pleasant Street, Great Barrington. The talk will begin at 5:30. Participants will learn about ways to support children when

they face the loss of a family member, teacher, friend, or even a pet. Refreshments will be served. MaryKate Jordan is the author of *Losing Uncle Tim* (Albert Whitman & Co.), a children's book about living through loss and grief. Mary Bedient-Wood is Bereavement Coordinator for HospiceCare. For more information, contact MaryKate Jordan at 528-4786, or Kristi Nelson, HospiceCare's Development Director, at 443-2994.

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## ON THE ROAD AGAIN

### More What Pleasured Me Most

When you spend the summer in the Berkshires in Massachusetts, you experience a variety of things, all the way from stopping on Tyringham Road to let a big black bear "lumber" across the road not looking right or left, to sitting at The Mount and watching *Ethan Frome*. In Searles' mansion I saw *Three Viewings*, set in a funeral parlor, and at Belden Tavern in Lee, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, Gail Nelson playing Billie Holliday belted it out—good, good. The relatively new Barrington Stage Company produced those two. At the Miniature Theatre of Chester I saw *Mass Appeal*, a funny and compassionate story of conflict between an old priest and an idealistic young seminarian he trains,

and *Princess Grace and the Faazzaris*, a delightful and insightful comedy about a wedding. At intermission you sup and eat, looking around the town hall (theatre for the day). You read the signs: 560 families in Chester; first floor—auditorium, Electric Light Office; Basement—Building Inspector, Conservation, Senior Center Police, Board of Health; second floor—Board of Selectmen, Tax Collector, Town Clerk, etc. Simple living in a small town! I sat in a room at The Mount (house of the memorable author Edith Wharton), in a room where Edith lived and wrote her outstanding stories a long time ago. I saw a beautifully-acted play, *Songs From the Heart*, by the talented Berkshire writer, Mickey Friedman. A storyteller weaves scenes from Edith's novels and short stories, giving us her personal history with Edith's own words. I saw another, *Madame de Treymes*, play written by Gary Mitchell, adapted from Edith Wharton. I found myself back in 1907. Afterward we had tea and cookies in Edith Wharton's dining room! Edith's presence was all around us.

Two men added to my visit to Monterey. First there was Wally, postmaster extraordinaire, an affable gentle-

man who makes even strangers welcome in Monterey. "How much are these stamps?" The answer is always "Only a dollar and five cents!" He has forwarded my mail to me in far corners of the world, always on time, always the correct address.

The other man is Keith, new minister in Monterey. I have gone to church since I was six. It pleasures me to go. Throughout the world—a Jewish Temple, a black Catholic church in New Orleans, Unity, Methodist, listening to American Indians' prayers, a Moslem Mosque in Istanbul, a Buddhist Temple in Bali, Cathedral in London. You go with a grateful heart. I believe we all, all, know that there is a higher power. Keith is a

little, gentle man, but he has much to say. As I listen, he gets me to focus my beliefs. I got a warm feeling when I visited Weston Priory, a community of

Benedictine monks set at the edge of the Green Mountain National Forest in Weston, Vermont. You sit outside listening to Mass. Inside the chapel/barn the young priests have guitars, and their voices—oh my, wonderful! (They sell tapes of their songs in their store, which is full of very nice things made there.) These monks are people of our time, not some other age.

When you go along the roads of Maine you read the signs (nothing else to do...the dogs and cat don't answer me). "Welcome to Maine. It is as good as you think!" and "How are your tires?" and "Reduce speed in rain or fog" and "State of Mind, be in Maine" and "Dim lights when you meet another car." Maine is great on signs. Another thing, when you listen to a Maine native for the first time you can't understand a word he says, same as in Alabama.

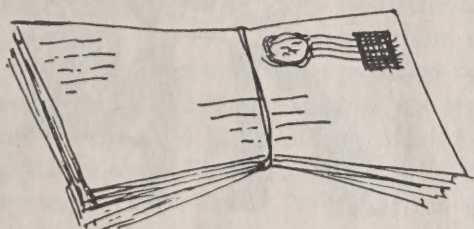
With the pleasures comes the sadness. My long-time friend Betty Scott and I had so much fun during the last years. I decided not to call, just walk in and surprise her. I opened the door of her apartment. The apartment was empty! Gone was the lovely round table where we had many a glass of wine. Gone was

the mile-long couch, where we sat and criticized the shows on TV. I raced downstairs. "What has happened to Betty?" An old gentleman said, "She died two months ago." I protested: "She had a cancer operation last summer, but her last letter said she was getting along fine." Later on in the summer I was a hostess for a *soirée* at the Edith Wilson house to let the people of Monterey see the house, so graciously given to the town. When you go into a friend's house for the first time without the owner being there you mourn her death so keenly.

I went to the East Hoosac Quaker Meeting House, at the Maple Street Cemetery in Adams, to listen to David McAllester's American Indian talk. The house was built in 1782. It took four years to complete because the Quakers, or Friends, were less interested in a monumental place of worship than living their hard-working lives. In their service, during the hour of silence, they did allow certain individuals to share their thoughts. One of those original people was Hannah Anthony Hoxie. Her picture still hangs on the wall, and she is buried outside. Her descendent was Susan B. Anthony, who lived in Adams the first six years of her life—Adams' Famous Daughter.

The camper had to have a new muffler, the little red Toyota a new tire. You have to keep up your modes of transportation! With the yellows, oranges, and reds decorating the trees of New England, it's about time to think of going South. A fond, fond good-bye for now.

— Joan Woodard Reed





## MONTEREY GRANGE

Members enjoyed a variety program at the regular meeting of Monterey Grange No. 291 on October 16, 1996. We will meet at Lecturer Mary Wallace's house to work on table favors to be used for the banquet at National Grange Meeting in Springfield in November of 1997. We have 200 already. State Grange will be October 24, 25, and 26 at the convention center in Leominster. The next meeting will be held on November 20, preceded by a covered dish supper. Guests are welcome.

— Fraternally,  
Mary Wallace, Lecturer



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## SENATOR SAYS

As students, teachers, and families have settled into the rhythm of another school year, I would like to take a moment to mention some exciting changes which are taking place in schools in Massachusetts. The age of technology is well upon us, and the Massachusetts Legislature is carefully developing a plan to effectively incorporate technology into educational programs.

On August 9, a bond bill was passed to provide funding for educational technology through a matching grants program. Recent articles in the Boston Globe have offered conflicting reports about the progress being made in releasing these funds. However, the Weld administration has recently reiterated its strong support for funding the local technology matching grants. The governor's office is working closely with the Department of Education to create an implementation plan for fully funded grants.

Two important steps must be taken before the educational technology funds will be released. First, the Legislature must enact a terms bill. I will continue to advocate for the passage of the terms bill and expect that it will be enacted in the next few weeks. A second step in the process is the development of protocols to be used in the distribution of funds. Several important issues will be taken into account when distributing funds and implementing educational technology.

As we improve the technology available to schools, developing an extensive technology infrastructure will be a high priority. A sound system of electrical wiring will serve as the foundation for all future improvements. Resolving the wiring and electrical issues is vital before hardware and software purchases are made.

Testing and demonstration sites will be established in various schools and districts. As educators visit the test sites, they will be able to see how the programs work in practice before making a com-

mitment to buy new technology. When purchasing new technology, alternatives to desk top personal computers will be considered to reduce expenses. For example, network computers deliver all the essential functions of PCs at about 20% of the cost. Finally, a purchasing collaborative will be created to offer schools leverage in both hardware and software purchasing.

In order to successfully use technology in education, a curriculum development group of educators and technology experts will be established. This group

will assist communities in making smart decisions about the value, longevity, and utility of various technology products. This type of support is needed so that schools can be sure that their investments will, over time, strengthen

teaching and curriculum development.

I believe that if carefully implemented and appropriately monitored, technological improvements will bring great educational benefits to our students. As funds are made available to improve technology in the classrooms, teachers and students will have access to valuable educational resources which would be otherwise inaccessible. As a member of the Senate Committee on Science and Technology, I am proud that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has taken action to support the use of technology in education. The strong support for educational technology represents a solid commitment to educating our children for the future.

— Senator Jane Swift



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## REP RAP

On September 3 my phones rang off the hook as people around the county began opening their morning mail. That was the notorious day when tens of thousands of Massachusetts senior citizens were blindsided with as much as a 37% jump in Medex supplemental insurance rates.

Medex is a program intended to fill the gaps of medical costs not covered by the Medicare system. Blue Cross and Blue Shield's Medex program is granted non-profit status by the state in exchange for being the insurer of last resort. Medex is the only choice for over 200,000 senior citizens in Massachusetts who cannot afford to cover the shortfalls of the Medicare system.

Medex Gold, a necessary expense for over 100,000 senior citizens around this Commonwealth, has proposed increasing its rates by \$50 per month. That is an outrageous amount to expect any household budget to absorb, much less those with fixed incomes.

A constituent who contacted me calculated the annual increases for policies covering him and his wife. According to his records, they are paying \$2,722 more a year now than they were only eight years ago. And this is just for supplemental health insurance, they still have Medicare premiums to pay as well. Now I ask you, how can any corporation, especially a non-profit insurer of last resort like Blue Cross/Blue Shield justify such an attack on our population?

As a result of these increases, I wrote a letter on September 4, 1996, to the Commissioner of the Division of Insurance formally opposing Blue Cross and Blue Shield's request and demanding that the Medex rates be frozen at their current levels. The Division of Insurance has allowed the process to move forward and has announced public hearings on the matter. Despite my formal request for one of the hearings to be set in Berkshire County, none was.

Therefore, I submitted formal testimony to be entered into the record at a September 18, 1996, hearing in Springfield. That testimony brought to light the fact that Blue Cross and Blue Shield's

attempt to raise rates is a ploy to financially recover from its failure to gain approval from the Federal government for an HMO alternative to their Medex lines. While the Company attempts to force our senior citizens to pay the price for its poor business judgment, Blue Cross and Blue Shield's top administrators earn multi-million dollar salaries and bonuses.

Further, on October 3, 1996, it was revealed that Prudential Insurance Company, which sells Medicare supplemental plans to the American Association of Retired Persons, has also requested near-30% increases on the plans it offers in Massachusetts. Further, Prudential has proposed an average of 24.9% increases on ten closed blocks of policies (those which no longer accept new people). These closed policies are purchased by approximately 23,600 AARP members throughout the Commonwealth.

Prudential had requested similar increases of the Connecticut Insurance Commission. The Connecticut authorities slashed the Prudential increases dramatically, asserting that claims of projected costs for 1997 were too high. Prudential's request for a 29.8% increase on certain policies was slashed to 17.4%. A 12.4% request on Connecticut's "Plan C"

was reduced to a mere 3.8% increase.

It is obvious that Prudential's request for increases in Massachusetts are inflated. It appears that since they were denied in Connecticut, they will turn to Massachusetts to try to reclaim the lost millions that they would rather pay to their executives. We cannot let that happen.

Medex supplemental insurance is regulated in Massachusetts so our citizens who need the added protection of more thorough medical coverage can access it. Supplemental insurance is designed as the insurance of last resort; it can not be allowed to become a cash cow for the insurance industry. If the industry suffers from poor judgment

on the part of their management strategies, then perhaps they should reconsider management bonuses and not raising the burden on our senior citizens.

I will continue this fight against the insurance industry by closely monitoring all filings with the Division of Insurance and entering testimony asserting the needs of the senior citizens of the Commonwealth and filing any legislation necessary to block these attacks on our senior population.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins



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## PATMOS:

### The Monastery of St. John

*We touch the ikons  
secretly in the slanting haze  
standing among the whispers  
others left*

*images one kisses  
teach one to love life*

*we search the faint, strained faces  
of Nicholas, Mary and John,  
their severity and grandeur  
by the scent of beeswax and myrrh,  
the old worked silver of the frames  
pewtered by time and prayer*

*faces of dignity, pity, faces of pride  
in sorrow*

*the lamps are hung on  
triple brass chains  
hushed before the many-imaged screen,  
almost a sacred chessboard  
perpendicular to chance*

*withered flowers  
in crevices tuck away a gratitude  
for something past*

*a fly at the window  
buzzes at the now*

*that screen  
separates the living somehow  
from life  
and either ventricle, the secular  
beats for the sacred, and the sacred  
beats for the commonplace*

*it is a great mystery*

*this devotion dances  
the quintessence of crimson;  
this chapel is like an enclosed heart  
pulsing for the world*

*outside is the distant fragrance of the sea  
and blue-lit spaces,  
beauty cobbled up and down  
white pierced by cypresses  
death struck down by daily suns  
and calendars of faith required*

*we climb Patmos  
the women smile  
the cocks crow  
the donkeys bray  
the old men ride astride wooden chairs, smoking.  
I love your breathing  
and the soft sound of your shoes  
on the rippling stone steps*

*we climb  
up that honeycomb of cornered whites  
to the roof and belfry  
to where no events are  
troubled by explanations*

*standing in tears  
at the parapets of reason  
at this blue edge of time  
trying to explain  
things get blown away, blown away*

*to risk the flesh  
to purity, to light!*

*tears with no explanations  
shatter into splinters of air  
all clarity and no defenses*

*the chapel beats below the feet  
like a reminding heart,  
it takes in the spectrum of breath  
to feed its inner sun*

*if I opened your body  
like the body of the world  
it would have a red heart, also  
full of ikons I could kiss*

*together we go down again to the white chapel,  
we enter like foreign substances  
into the auricles of faith.*

— A. O. Howell



## HITCH-HIKER

*The maples shed their leaves today  
In a shower of red and orange and gold.*

*One fluttered to my shoulder  
As I walked a country road;  
There the small leaf rested  
'til the wind took it away  
To go and join its brothers  
In the meadow at their play.*

— Eleanor Kimberley



*Sweet confusion such as this  
Holds no answers  
Only perfect purpose  
An erotic instinct  
Confirmed in a kiss  
A probing need  
An endless greed  
Each of us a key  
Provocative and soothing  
In the beauty set free  
By the longing*

— Nick Hardcastle

## THIS FIRST MOURNING

For William Sellers Cox, Sr.

*Leaves falling, shimmering to the ground in  
such great numbers  
on a gust of wind this first morning that  
his breath is still,  
on a breath of wind this first morning that  
I've seen them fall  
this year. Thirty thousand mornings he woke  
to see the sun  
brightening the land, shimmering on the  
sea, lifting mist  
gently from the crevices of hills, as  
he was lifted  
gently from his body, like a breath of  
wind, like a leaf.*

*Sea, lifting mist  
to see the sun.  
I've seen it fall.  
His breath is still.  
He was lifted:  
wind, like a leaf.*

*Thirty thousand mornings he woke,  
leaves falling, shimmering to the ground  
brightening the land, shimmering  
on a gust of wind  
gently, from the crevices of the hills.  
On a breath of wind  
gently he lifted from his body.  
I see the sun  
this first morning that his breath is still,  
leaves falling in such great numbers.*

— MaryKate Jordan





## "DIGGIN' MY POTATOES..."

Sometimes people who do routine work get a song or phrase going in their minds, or even a name. I have a friend who, while splitting wood, found his inner walkman inexplicably repeating "Hosni Mubarak, Hosni Mubarak." Another person I know gets going on some mindless task and comes to at some point realizing he has been counting on and on. He'll be way up in the hundreds, unsure as to how he got there (by ones, by tens?) or when he began.

I often get a fragment of some jig or reel bopping over and over on my inner tape loop. This is more likely to be something Irish or square-dancey than J. S. Bach, and it can get pretty old. (This music is more fun to do in a string band ensemble in a dance hall jumping with dancers.)

Lately, though, the inner music has been fitting the task. I find myself singing (silently), "You been diggin' my potatoes, tramlin' on my vine..." This is a song I haven't actually heard since my high school days when I used to listen to blues. I didn't know much about potatoes and double entendre was a concept encountered mostly on English quizzes. I got the point that somebody was messin' in somebody else's garden, and all that that might entail, but this was a general understanding, only.

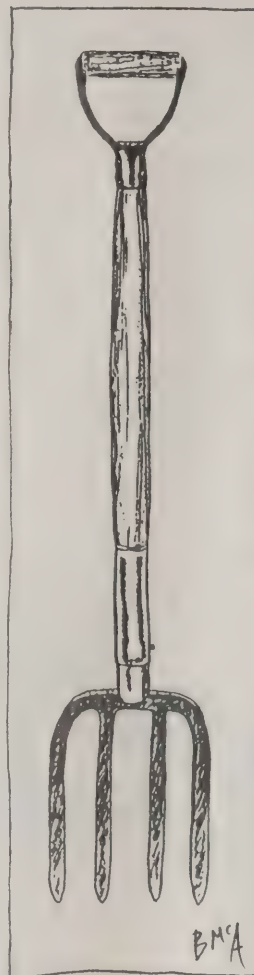
Now that I am free of quizzes and adolescent blues, I am singing that old song again and it is about potatoes, plain and simple. I plant them in May, fight the beetles all summer, and dig them usually

in November. Sometimes I am prying off an inch or so of frozen ground to pick up the potatoes with freezing fingers, but this year I got them in a little early because I'm going to be away for three weeks and can't stand to go off leaving my bounty unguarded. They could freeze, mice could get them, or heavy rains could wash the dirt off and expose them to sunlight which would turn them green and inedible.

We have a good spot here for potatoes. The ground is pretty sandy, and both onions and potatoes always do well. I'm told my ancestors grew potatoes here and I sometimes wonder if my potato bugs are descended from the ones Dad Keyes used to pick. One thing is pretty certain: my potatoes themselves are descended from some Inca varieties of nearly 2,000 years ago. In Andean villages today you can find more than sixty varieties of potatoes, but I only grow two right now. I have tried quite a few and like them all, even the crazy purple ones. The main reason I don't grow them any more is that they are hard to spot in the dark, chilly November afternoons. They look too much like some of my purple rocks and purple clods of dirt.

I know some people will not eat a potato. They are wary of its relationship to the deadly nightshade. One person once said to me, "I don't trust them; they bloom at night." Hmm. My potatoes bloom in the daytime, with nice creamy blossoms, and later on they make little green fruits that look like tomatoes. Tomatoes are also members of the nightshade family, *Solanaceae*, as are peppers, eggplants, tobacco, and petunias, to name a few. It's true that they can get green and be bad for you, and I would never eat the foliage or fruits, nor would I eat anything that has eaten the foliage. My chickens will not eat a potato beetle or its larva, and if it's not fit for chickens, it certainly is not good enough for me. The green parts of the potato family contain solanine, which is toxic and tastes terrible.

My potatoes are tucked into the root cellar now. I don't weigh them, but it took many trips down from the garden lugging five-gallon buckets full. We'll eat them all winter and even into June. There are plenty for planting in May and by July we'll be wiggling our fingers into the soft earth to start sneaking out the little new potatoes. There are many ways to cook potatoes, lots of fancy recipes, but in this family we nearly always have them baked or boiled, whole or mashed. Once in awhile I'll get industrious and fix them scalloped. This requires quite a bit of slicing, and as I go slice, slice, slice that old refrain starts up: "You been diggin' my potatoes, tramlin' on my vine." I just know those guys ate potatoes, and probably grew them, too. Could it be they were really singing about the garden? Well, maybe not, but I am.



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— Bonner J. McAllester



## WILDLIFE SURVEY

**From the Roads.** Of course the most notable thing has been the color of the foliage. The sugar maples have been more yellow-gold than scarlet this year and, after the middle of October, more and more gray branches have been showing through the rich coloratura of the hillsides. Starting the night of the eighteenth a strong nor'easter began blowing, whipping the leaves off the trees in clouds and swirling them about on the roads and meadows. This is that brief time when the ground shows more color than the trees. We're starting the period when the russet of the oaks becomes the main color, contrasted with the grey branches and the sturdy green of the conifers. The hillsides are still a Persian carpet, but it's older, with softer colors, and a bit threadbare.

**Report from Dale Duryea.** Coyotes are making the most news in the wildlife management world. Dale said, "It's the worst I've seen, all over South County." In Alford some calves were brought down right near their barn, and a coyote was seen in this record-breaking proximity to human habitation. The Gould Farm count of sheep lost is up to thirteen.

Beavers are actively building up their dams for protection through the winter. There is flooding at the corner of Sandisfield and Cronk Roads and on Brett Road. Muskrat "push-ups" (stacks of weeds for food supply) are appearing on the waterline of drawn-down Lake Garfield; these industrious animals are abundant this year, especially in Parker's Cove. There are mink and otter tracks in the mud region around the lake and Dale saw an otter looking up at him from under the bridge over the Konkapot on Curtis Road. There are six two-year does with their fawns ranging on the Duryea property: they seem unusually fearless; blue herons, mallards, black ducks, and an unusual lot of wood ducks are on the lake; a bear climbed up on a unoccupied car on Blue Hill Road; a fisher was seen on Beartown Mountain Road; a few red foxes have been seen unusually near houses (perhaps for protection from coyotes?); geese were rare on the lake during

goose-hunting season, September 3-26; now, during duck season, the geese are back! Turkeys are benefiting from the abundant acorn crop; bobcats have been reported near Beartown State Forest. At the end of the month Dale had one rabid raccoon on Blue Hill Road to put out of its misery. He recommends continued caution with any wild animals behaving oddly (such as letting you get close to them). He looks forward with apprehension to the vote on Question 1 this November 5. "It is so sweeping and with such severe penalties that I'm going to be history if it passes."

**Flowers.** A little-seen addendum to the fall color: Hidden away in the meadow grass is a small plant with halberd-shaped leaves that are a glowing, even "shocking," pink in mid-October. It is field, or sheep sorrel. The leaves have another distinction: they have a sharp-sour taste like the others of the "six sour sisters" (common wood sorrel, creeping wood, great wood, violet wood, and yellow wood). Other flowers observed: October 4, blue curls, red clover, wood aster, black-eyed Susan, blue-stemmed goldenrod, wild thyme in sheltered places. Mostly, now, the abundant flowers, like the asters, are reduced to dried seed clusters on dead stalks. Milkweed pods are open and the white down catches the light, making some of our fields look like cotton fields when the bolls have opened.

**Mushrooms.** Now is the time when scores of inky caps appear and quickly vanish. Puff balls are drying out and send up small clouds of spores if you touch them. If you're cutting the tangled second-growth meadow grass you're likely to see a whole world of low-growing mushrooms underneath.

— David P. McAllester

## UPON MY WORD!

This was written about 1,000 A.D. in England, but it could be life in Monterey in 1996. Can you decipher it? Sound out the words to help translate them.

SE EOLDA MAN BENEOTHAN  
THAM TREOWE NEAH THAERE  
BRYGGE WUNETH ON THAM HUSE  
UPPON THAM HYLLE BEGEONDAN  
THAM STREAME MID HIS HUNDE  
AND TWAMCATTAM. HIS WIF IS NU  
DEAD. HE NE HAEFTH BEARN AND  
FRIEND NE CUMETH OFT TO HIS  
DORE. ON THAM GEARDE  
BEHINDAN HIS HUSE BEOTH TWA  
GAET, FEAWA HENNE AND BEON.  
HE MAKETHCIESE [Monterey Cheese?]  
FRAMHIS GATUM AND BAECTH HIS  
AGENAN BREAD. THURH SUMOR  
HAEFTH HE MA NIG AEGRU FRAM  
HIS HENNUM AND FISCAS OF THAM  
LYTELAN BROCE WITHINNAN HIS  
GEARDE. THONNE CYMTH  
HAERFEST. HEGADERATHAEPPLAS  
OF THAM TREOWUM. THONNE  
CYMTHWINTER THA IS SNAWOFE  
THAM GRUNDE. THURH THONE  
DAEG MAEG HE GADERIAN WUDU  
FRAMTHAMFELDUMNEAH HIS HUS  
TO MACIENNE FYR. WULFAS [coy-  
otes?] BEORCATH TOFORAN HIS HUS  
THA LANGAN NIHT. HIS HEORT IS  
GLAEDU THONNE CYMTHLENTEN.  
THA DAEGAS WEAXATHLENGRAN,  
SEO SUNNE SCINTH. TREO BEOTH  
GRENE AND HEOFONS FUGLAS  
[chickadees?] SINGATH ONGEAN.  
SONA CYMTH HIS ENDE ACHENE IS  
SARIG. DAEGlice THANCETH HE  
HIS GODE FOR LANGUM LIFE AND  
NE WYSCTH LENG TO LIBANNE  
WITHUTAN HIS GODAN WIFE.

— Alice O. Howell

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| <p>No 2</p> <p>Spaul Allen</p> <p>Abraham Collins</p> <p>Alfred Brown</p> <p>Sam. Spring</p> <p>Stephen Brewer</p> <p>Abel Bondick</p> | <p>No 10</p>  | <p>No 18</p> <p>Sam. Dwyer</p> <p>Hughes Hall</p> <p>Sam. Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> <p>Berg. Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> |
| <p>No 3</p> <p>Isaac Brewer</p> <p>David Fowler</p> <p>E. D. Dwyer</p> <p>Paul M. Dwyer</p>  | <p>No 11</p> <p>Salathiel Hale</p> <p>Enl. Churchill</p> <p>Arion Campbell</p> <p>Ben. Dwyer</p>  | <p>No 19</p> <p>Peter Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p> <p>John Dwyer</p>                                      |

From the archives at The Bidwell House, a portion of the seating plan for the meeting house from the year 1800.

## SEATING AND STATUS

Second installment in a continuing series on the history of Monterey United Church of Christ, by Kathy Page Wasiuk and Delight Dodyk, undertaken concurrently with planning for restoration and renovation of the venerable structure in the present-day town center.

In last month's account of the establishment of Township Number One (later Tyngham) and its first church, we saw that economic status, political clout, and spiritual prominence were tightly knit from the very beginning. An examination of seating in the second meeting house, individual tax valuation, and census data illustrates this aspect of the early life of our church, and reveals as well a

shift under way in the local economy by the turn of the century.

**Subsistence Agriculture To Market Economy.** Tyngham's valuation list of 1802<sup>1</sup> shows an agricultural community with considerable manufacturing capability. There were 155 dwelling houses, 164 barns, and two shops (one of which is now the Monterey General Store); the list also includes two tanning houses, four slaughterhouses, pearl ash and potash works,<sup>2</sup> and thirteen mills (grist, saw, and "other"). Nearly 300 acres were listed as "high meadow," 700 acres were in tillage, 1,300 in hay, and 1,500 in pasture; apple trees produced 535 barrels of cider. Sixteen thousand acres were calculated to be unimproved, and an additional 4,500 were considered unimprovable swamps, rocky outcrops,

or steep slopes. The landscape held 331 horses, 139 oxen, 755 cows, and 522 swine to support a population of 1,712 people. In Berkshire County only Pittsfield, Sheffield, Williamstown, New Marlborough, and Great Barrington had larger human populations than Tyngham in 1802—and Great Barrington's was only marginally larger, with 1,754 souls.

This record reveals the beginning of change in the town's productive base. In the ten years since 1792 five new houses had been built, but there were twenty-five fewer barns. Some families did not practice subsistence agriculture or keep animals. The number of grist mills producing flour from grains had decreased by two-thirds, perhaps due to production economies, or less raw material, or an



oversupply of millers. Land was still being cleared: 230 more acres had been put into pasture and smaller gains were made in tillage, hayfield, and meadow. Perhaps struggling settlers had also given up on some stony New England ground as too difficult to farm: more than 1,300 acres had been shifted to the unimprovable column by 1802. Despite this the town was growing in value: the \$1,200 increase in total valuation represented an eighteen percent gain in ten years. The town's rapid movement toward a market economy is further evident in the listing of such items as "\$1,280 money at interest," the sum of outstanding cash loans among townspeople.

**Who Sits Where?** We are fortunate that we still have valuation lists for 1802 and 1809, census data for 1800,<sup>3</sup> and the meeting house seating plan for 1800,<sup>4</sup> as well as a 1796 list of subscribers<sup>5</sup> who underwrote construction of a new meeting house, one of two begun in 1796 to replace the original, which had burned. (Two replaced one on account of geography, along with the usual economic and spiritual considerations. We will explore those details next month.) Although the terms of wealth reflected in the valuation of this period are still largely agricultural (acreage and livestock), seating in the meeting house, decided by committee, clearly makes a public display of community status, the worthy combination of wealth and righteousness.

The seating plan of 1800 shows that the new building was rectangular, with thirty-six pews, nine rows of four pews each. (This meeting house, completed in 1798, was enlarged sometime during the revival years of 1816-1820, with a different configuration and more pews to accommodate an increasing town population.) The plan does not locate doors, aisles, or the pulpit, but the pew located in the upper left hand corner of the plan, designated Number One, held the family of minister Joseph Avery. The "Widows' Pew" was proximate, indicating that the pulpit was centered on this gable end of the building. There was probably a raised gallery at the end opposite the pulpit. On




the far right of the front row were seated Alvin Taylor, Isaac Harmon, Asa Fowler, and Jonas Brewer. As one moved back through the rows, other families were assigned: Abel and Isaac Benedict (of Benedict Pond), Adonijah Bidwell, son of the first minister, Lieutenant Isaac Garfield, and others less well known today: Samuel Barber, Ebenezer Chadwick, Darius Stebbins, Amariah Wheelock.

Alvin Taylor, privileged to sit in the front row, owned a fairly large farm of 170 acres, but he also leased an additional seventy-five acres. He had a large dairy herd, a medium herd of swine, two oxen, and a very small family of three, including his wife and a daughter under the age of ten. He and his wife no doubt produced far more than the family consumed. Abel Benedict, who sat in the second row, had a larger farm (200 acres), but was an older man whose six children, while old enough to be helpful in running his farm and caring for his thirteen cows, three horses, two oxen, and seven pigs, must have consumed their own productivity. Adonijah Bidwell, who had inherited his father's farm, was also assigned to the second row.

Identifying such prominent community members must have been fairly clear-cut for the seating committee, but assigning the middle pews, beginning with the third row, was a more delicate business. There one finds Captain Chadwick, who

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had fought in the Revolution and had a farm of 140 acres with a large dairy herd, but who had to feed seven children under sixteen. Seated next to him was Elisha Taylor, who farmed 150 acres, had nine horses and eleven cows, and whose family included six young children and an older man (perhaps his father or father-in-law). Daniel Garfield occupied the same row, with a smaller farm of ninety-nine acres and thirty leased acres. The census suggests that Daniel and his wife, both over the age of forty-five, a male and female aged between sixteen and twenty-six, and three little girls under the age of ten all lived under one roof. In the seventh row, near the back but not quite at the rear, a pew was reserved as the "Negro Pew," but no individual names are listed. The census for that year counted five blacks, all unnamed and undifferentiated as to age, sex, or relationship.

Toward the back of the house, one found families like that of Ebenezer Jackson. He was an older man who held a small farm (fifty acres) and had a large family: seven children are listed, as well as one adult in addition to Ebenezer and his wife. Only one horse and six cows occupied Ebenezer's barn.

These patterns suggest that those church members with larger families, responsibility for an aging parent or other adult, or with children who were not old enough to provide substantial help in doing farm work, were not as prosperous and thus were not seated in the first rank.

Citizens of the young Republic were filled with enthusiasm for independence, excited about the prospects of material prosperity, and not yet set back by the economic depression that would strike in 1819. Attention was moving to a greater integration of the spiritual possibilities of the next world and the practical interests of this. While spiritual life remained central, members' material well-being was reflected in the seating plan. That one worshipped was a spiritual matter; where one sat to do so seemed a strictly material consideration.

— Kathy Page Wasiuk

1. Valuation list in archives at The Bidwell House.

2. Potash is an impure form of potassium carbonate that remains after leaching wood ashes and evaporating the lye; pearl ash is a further purification of potash. Early in the nineteenth century English woolen mills required vast quantities of this crude chemical for fulling wool to make it into softer cloth. Potash was one more product of the abundant American forests valued in England. The new Republic exported tons of it.

3. Census data from the Silvio O. Conte National Archives and National Records Center in Pittsfield.

4. Seating plan in archives of The Bidwell House.

5. List of subscribers in archives of The Bidwell House.

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### Science & The Souls of Fallen Trees

We received a letter recently from Copeland MacClintock, who is only partly joking when he calls himself a "forensic meteorologist." He has become an expert on the effects of tornadoes, and is currently working on a detailed study of the Memorial Day storm here in 1995. He writes,

Last winter, while I was measuring treefall directions on Hall's Hill, and the sun was low in the western sky, I noticed a single, white house standing out in bold relief on a hilltop several miles to the north. What a great place for someone to witness the storm from! And sure enough, it ends up being the home of an eyewitness!

When the final publication comes out, or if I get to give any interim talks on the storm, you will be notified.

The poem by Meryl Joseph, "In Memoriam: I Was a Tree," [*Monterey News*, July, 1995] was particularly moving. Having mea-

sured the treefall direction of about 5,000 trees between Monterey and Greenport, New York, I appreciate her words because they cast whole new light on the subject—from the point of view of the tree. She is a keen observer of what happened during the storm. On reading her poem, many vivid scenes come to mind. I can even recall individual trees.

— Copeland MacClintock

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## VOXED\*

### Leo's Lecture

My longtime friend Leo has been keeping his usual low profile, with occasional lapses. He was out on the Cape most of the summer with Valya. Her specialty is lighting for theater, but she is an all-around techie who also works in radio and film. She's busy when she works; between jobs she goes for long walks over the dunes out there, or loses herself in the Berkshire woods. Leo was the malingeringer during the summer, spending his days at Valya's dune shack while she worked. Now they are back in the hills, and Leo is trying to catch up in his shop while Valya is out wandering around. She pays close attention every fall to the lowering sun, clocks the change as leafless trees let through the pale, raking light of winter, and expand the sound of wind to a roar.

Leo is having a nasty time of it, his mental landscape wintry as the plunging weather. We make a pair: I am Woe and he is Spleen; I am weak, short daylight and he is the high wind. Seasonal change is not the only cause of our condition. He is confrontational: why are elections held in November? he demands. I remind him wearily that this is done to honor human longing, a perpetual condition. In early November even Californians, at the mercy of wind and fire, experience dread, an emotion essential to a vigorous electorate. Dread winter, long for spring, vote hopeful.

Leo says it's not funny. His anger has him hitting off target. The other day

we were riding into town when he suddenly pulled off the road, got out of the car, and approached a younger man blowing leaves into a pile. The man working motioned Hold on, while Leo stood with his back to me in the car. When he shut off the blower Leo started in on him about small gas engines and noise, ozone depletion—the lot. The poor guy was momentarily dumbstruck, then it seemed he had an anger ready at hand to match Leo's, and by the time I got over to them they were nose to nose. Leo was hissing something about "...a rake—for God's sake let them rot where they lie!" and the guy was growling about getting paid to watch leaves rot. I rolled my eyes, turned Leo back toward the car, and got behind the wheel myself. We finished our errands in silence, Leo feeling properly foolish, and I very tired.

Voting booths remind me of dressing rooms, even though in Monterey we don't use a curtain. Cubicles for private acts in public places. Curtain or no, I have never doubted the anonymity of my vote, a luxurious comfort. Compare voting with dreaming: I alone know what I dreamed; I can tell you, but in the telling my dream recedes, changing form like a cloud in the wind, then calcifies into whatever I told you it was. This is no good: dreams are essentially fluid, unpredictable. My vote is no dream, but it is both personal and archetypal, like a dream. What difference does my dream make? I vote for him or her, yes or no, the

same as so many others, but *my* vote is infused with *my* longing, *my* dread, a richly imagined universe. Once cast, my vote cannot be retracted. I have been known to vote impulsively. I have never known the consequences of my own vote, only of *the* vote. The voting booth is a dangerous intersection: private, public, imagined, and real worlds collide in there

behind the curtain, secretly, no matter what you say.

"You're weird," says Leo, glowering while I explain all this. We sit naked in his sauna, sweating out the leaf-blower episode.

Then he says, as if answering a question he thinks I asked, "Votes count. Wrapping your vote in some philosophical reverie is crap. It's hazardous.

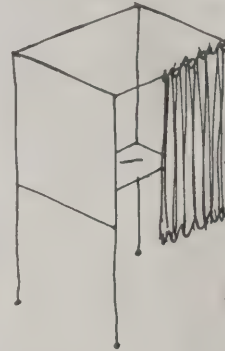
Do you know that gasoline-powered garden tools account for five percent of air pollution? That a mower produces nearly twelve times the amount of hydrocarbons produced by an *automobile*? That a leaf blower run for one hour produces the same amount of hydrocarbons as a car driven for *thirty-four* hours? That garden tools in this country produce nearly seven million *tons* of atmospheric pollutants? I vote against the stuff. I like to lie in the sun without thinking about cancer. EPA regulations on small engines take effect in 1997. Politics. Voting. It counts." He is still in a fury.

"I guess voting is nicer than ruining some guy's afternoon. I didn't see leaf blowers on the ballot, though."

"Well you better find it, huh? And make sure you get it right, because there's no quiz, and certainly no essay question. This is pass/fail, no makeup."

That's his exit line. He stomps out into the early November dusk, naked with an armful of clothes, a towel over his head, down the path to his house. I linger, wrung out, clean, looking forward only to sleep, and unpredictable dreams.

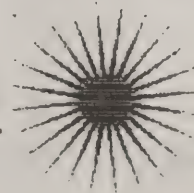
— Peter Murkett



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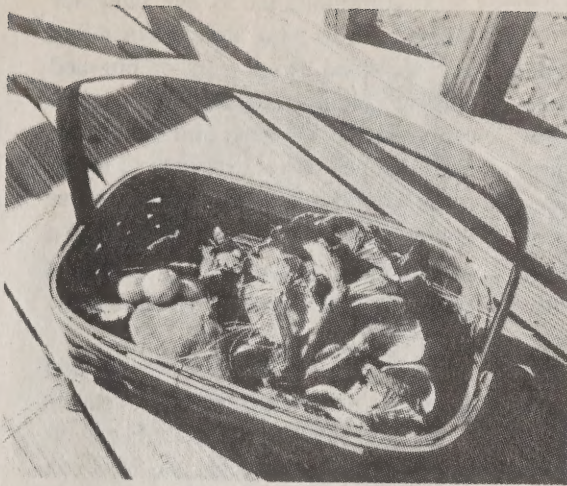
\*One syllable, rhymes with "boxed."  
Title for occasional editorial commentary,  
variously clothed.



## IN SEARCH OF HEN-O'-THE WOODS

Carving a wide swath from Campbell's Falls to Beartown State Forest, two intrepid mushroomers searched the Columbus Day woods for the fat, juicy, frilly yellow fungi called the Hen o' the Woods. My friend Paul, the expert, and I, the novice, sought the edible, easy-to-identify, delicious mushroom for a soup we planned later in the weekend. A detour led us to seek directions at the Buggy Whip Factory in Southfield, where we found the perfect mushroom-gathering device—an antique egg basket of woven wood strips. Armed with the right directions, we headed for our first site.

The spray was invigorating and the view was awesome at Campbell's Falls, but there was a dearth of the old oaks that those fungi feed on. After losing the trail, and some treacherous climbing, we decided to look for deciduous trees elsewhere. At Monument Mountain we had a more promising field. Honey mushrooms and golden *pholiota* were edible, and *emetic russula* were not, but there were other treats. A scrimshaw mushroom, or artist's fungi, spread out like a huge oyster with a broad, flat white bottom that, with the click of a twig, became the perfect artist's palette. As we darted



LAURA GACCIONE

around oak trees, heads down with basket, we might have been figures in a fairy tale. The overflow parking lot had been daunting, but we found quiet and serenity, and the warm colors and diaphanous light were relaxing and invigorating. But no hens. "I hope you know what you're doing," we were told by those worried that we would pick and eat the poisonous. "We only eat what we're one hundred percent sure of," Paul answered. "When in doubt, leave it out."

But another, more promising site awaited us. The parasitic mushrooms apparently have a passion for dead wood. What better place than the section of the Appalachian Trail we had walked in its more lush and majestic days before the tornado. We had grieved the loss evident

during a later walk from the 23/57 intersection down to the meandering water.

The downed, dead tree limbs awaited us. Life had come back in the form of moss and fungi. Cinabar-red polypore were profuse, emerging from a sweep of tree like red musical notes going up a scale. Moist and beefy, they were not edible, nor were the cheese polypore which we also saw. But no hen.

I had to distance myself from Paul as he clucked like a hen on the trails of Beartown Mountain.

He was desperate. Finally, at a distance off the trail, he spotted it. "I'm about to do something dangerous," he said solemnly.

"Fine," I said, increasing the distance between us. "I'm not looking." To myself I mused, It's all in the search.

When he caught up with me he was henless but in one piece. There was no hen for that egg basket. We joked about Zen and the art of mushrooming, and marvelled at the beauty of the afternoon.

— Laura Gaccione

*Laura Gaccione is a free-lance writer and child care worker who will become Editor of Monterey News next January. She and Paul used store-bought Shitake mushrooms for their soup.*

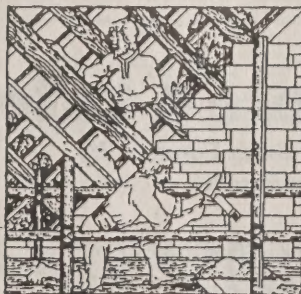


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## PERSONAL NOTES

Our congratulations to Mark and Mary Makuc on the birth of their son Joseph Victor on October 9 at Fairview Hospital, a healthy 8 lbs., 2 oz. and measuring 19 1/2 inches long. Big sister Gabriella is thrilled to have him (most of the time, that is) and they are settling nicely at their home at Gould Farm. Congratulations also to proud grandparents Henry and Anne Marie Makuc of Main Road and to all those excited aunts and uncles, too!

Dick and Barbara Tryon enjoyed a recent visit with daughter Linda, her husband Claude, and their six-year-old twin granddaughters, Harmonie and Kelly at their home in Bex, Switzerland. The family owns a horse farm and riding school surrounded by mountains at one end of Lake Geneva—sounds nothing short of spectacular, does it not?

**Peter S. Vallianos**  
Attorney at Law  
528-0055

General practice includes real estate purchases, sales, family transfers, and transfers in trust, zoning, land use matters, conservation restrictions landlord-tenant; wills, probate; commercial law.

\*\*\*

I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.

Congratulations to our daughter Michelle Grotz who, after a demanding and dedicated three years of pre-med study at Columbia, has entered the application/interview phase, and has at this time received two acceptances to medical schools! Whichever she chooses, her dream of medical school will become a reality when commences her studies next fall. We are overjoyed for her and ever so proud!

Very happy birthday wishes this month to Patrick McBride on November 1, To Sudi baker and Heather Ferrin on November 2, To Graham and Madigan Hines on November 3, to Jacob Markwood and Maria Westenberg on November 4, to Andi Dunlop on November 11, to Mariah Rutherford-Olds on November 12, to Cody Amstead on November 18, to Florence Brown, Jenny Brown, Gale Forbes, and Kirsten Quisenberry on November 25, to Kerry Snyder on November 26, to Michaila Lyman on November 27, and to Nicole Amidon on November 28.

And happy anniversary to Mark and Kathleen Kraft Dewing on November 19.

If you have birthday greetings, news items, etc. that you would like to share, we would love to hear from you. Simply give me a call at 528-4519, or jot items down and drop them in the mail to me, just Route 23. Thanks in advance!

— Stephanie Grotz

## THE OBSERVER - SEPTEMBER

Normal weather with double the rain.

|                                |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| High temp (9/6) .....          | 84°     |
| Low temp. (9/26) .....         | 37°     |
| Avg. high temp. ....           | 69°     |
| Avg. low temp. ....            | 51°     |
| Avg. temp. ....                | 60°     |
| Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....   | 58.6°   |
| Precip. occ. ....              | 12 days |
| Total precip. (rainfall) ..... | 7.08"   |
| Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....   | 3.52"   |
| High bar. press. (9/27) .....  | 30.37"  |
| Low bar. press. (9/23) .....   | 29.53"  |
| Low humidity (9/26) .....      | 69%     |
| Avg. wind speed .....          | 1.5 mph |
| High wind gust (9/28) .....    | 26 mph  |

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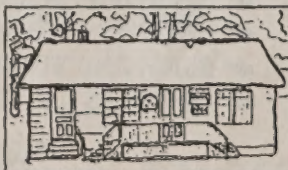
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-- Matthew Brewer, a Roadside regular

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## CALENDAR

**Sundays, November 3, 10, 17, and 24**  
AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

**Saturday, November 16** Edith Wilson estate auction of art and antiques, from 8:30 a.m. (preview) at the firehouse.

**Tuesday, November 19** Free blood pressure clinic, 9-10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange (town offices), Main Road.

**Wednesday, November 20**  
Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

**Saturday, November 23** Square and contradance at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, 8:30-11:30 p.m. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Refreshments. Adults \$5, children \$2. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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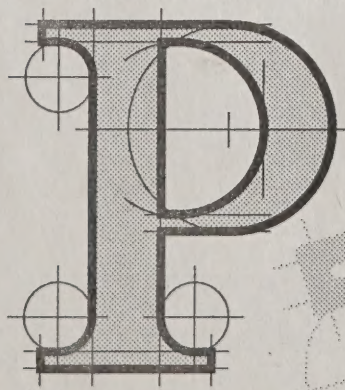
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*News* by mail (free!) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit an ad with graphics on a Macintosh formatted disk. Address your request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us in Monterey at 413-528-3454.

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*Contributions from local artists this month: Robin Crofut, p. 17; Annabel Edelman, p. 10; Bonner McAllester, p. 14; Pete Murkett, pp. 4, 6, 9, 20.*

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